

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

MARCH 23, 1880.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. CAMERON, of Pennsylvania, from the Committee on Military Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill S. 1520.]

*The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred the petition of Robert P. Wilson, late captain in the Fifth United States Cavalry, praying to be restored to his former rank and position in the Army, have had the same under consideration, and beg leave to make the following report:*

The committee called upon the Secretary of War for a statement of the military record of Captain Wilson, which was furnished, and which is unexceptional and honorable in every respect. This military history is as follows:

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,  
ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
*Washington, January 20, 1880.*

Military history of Robert P. Wilson, of the United States Army, as shown by the files of this office.

*Volunteer record.*

Mustered into service January 24, 1862, as first lieutenant and adjutant Third Battalion Pennsylvania Cavalry, and served as such until October 2, 1862, when he was mustered out at Washington, D. C.

*Regular Army record.*

Enlisted 7th April, 1863, at Philadelphia, Pa., for the Twelfth Infantry; appointed second lieutenant Fifth Cavalry, June 1, 1863; first lieutenant Fifth Cavalry, May 8, 1864; captain Fifth Cavalry, June 12, 1869. Brevetted first lieutenant, August 1, 1863, for gallant and meritorious services at the battle of Brandy Station, Va., and captain, May 10, 1864, for gallant and meritorious services in action at Beaver Dam, Va.

*Service.*—Joined regiment, July, 1863, and served with it in the Cavalry Corps, Army of the Potomac, to August 1, 1863, when wounded at the battle of Brandy Station, Va.; absent, sick, to September, 1863; with regiment, in the Army of the Potomac, to May 10, 1864, when taken prisoner in the action at Beaver Dam Station, Va.; prisoner of war to December, 1864; on sick-leave and certificate of disability to June 29, 1865; on duty at Carlisle Barracks, Pa., to July 18, 1865; on sick-leave to September 16, 1865; on duty at Carlisle Barracks, Pa., to October 28, 1865; on recruiting service at Saint Louis, Mo., to January 27, 1866; on duty at Carlisle Barracks, Pa., to May 23, 1866; with regiment in Tennessee to May 2, 1867; on leave to June 28, 1867; with regiment in Tennessee to August 13, 1868; on sick-leave to October 10, 1868; with regiment in Mississippi to April, 1869, in Nebraska to December 2, 1869; on leave to March 23, 1870; with regiment in Wyoming to April 23, 1871; on leave to June 1, 1871; with regiment in Wyoming to October 8, 1871; on leave to December 11, 1871; conducting recruits to and with regiment in Arizona to August 19, 1872; on leave to March 9, 1873; conducting recruits to and with regiment in Arizona to September 30, 1874; on leave to September 29, 1875; with regiment in Kansas to November 9, 1875;

on leave to December 5, 1875; with regiment in Kansas to June 5, 1876, when he left with his company for the field on the Big Horn and Yellowstone expedition, serving with company to July 15, 1876, when authorized to proceed to his home at Philadelphia, Pa., and await action on his resignation, which was accepted July 29, 1876.

SAMUEL BRECK,  
*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

In a letter dated January 15, 1878, to General Horace B. Strait, a member of the House Committee on Military Affairs of the last Congress, Brig. Gen. W. H. Emory speaks of Captain Wilson as follows:

Having been called upon by Capt. Robert P. Wilson to state his character and capacity while he served with me, I take pleasure in stating that I commanded the Fifth Cavalry in person from 1866 to 1871, and that Captain Wilson during that time bore himself with great propriety and good conduct, and did his duty with propriety and fidelity. I have heard nothing to the contrary, or subsequent military or personal history.

The petitioner avers under oath that during his imprisonment (which is referred to in the aforementioned military history) he suffered severely from exposure, hunger, and confinement. Shortly after his release, and while on parole in Philadelphia, he was taken sick and continued so for about six months, at the end of which time he was only able to perform light duty, but unfit for service in the field. During his sickness he had typhoid fever accompanied by pneumonia, which resulted in an abscess of the left lung. This fact is corroborated by the certificates of two or three surgeons; one of them is sufficient to quote here:

First Lieut. Robert P. Wilson, Fifth United States Cavalry, brevet captain United States Army, having applied for a certificate on which to ground an application for leave of absence, I do hereby certify that I have carefully examined this officer and find that he has a cicatrized lesion of the left lung of three years' standing, the result of an old abscess, and that he is suffering in consequence at present to such an extent as to render him unfit for duty.

I further declare my belief that he will not be able to resume his duties in a less period than four months, that his ultimate recovery is distant and uncertain, and that his condition is such as demands a change of climate other than that afforded by the limits of this department.

Dated at Chattanooga, Tenn., this 23d day of July, 1868.

E. M. WIGHT,  
*A. A. Surgeon U. S. A.*

The petitioner states in his petition (which is under oath) that he did not resign his commission because he desired to leave the Army, but on account of ill health contracted in a Confederate prison, where he was during a period of seven months, including a whole summer, and in a southern climate, to which he was unaccustomed, and that while laboring both from bad health and great mental depression consequent upon the wounds received by him he resigned as the only means of seeking relief.

The petitioner further says that he has fully recovered his health, is now robust and strong, is 35 years of age, and is anxious to return to those duties and to that service to which he has given fifteen years of his life.

All the above facts being fully sustained by competent testimony, the committee see no reason why he should not be restored to the Army.

Your committee therefore beg leave to report the accompanying bill, and recommend its passage.